



Comhairle Cathrach  
& Contae **Luimnigh**

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**Limerick** City  
& County Council

**Design & Delivery Services**  
**Limerick City & County Council**

**Planning Report**

Oct 2019

for  
**Residential Development**  
at  
**Montpelier**  
**Co. Limerick**

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## 1.Team Directory

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## 2. Introduction

Limerick City & County Council recognises the Social Housing Investment Programme as a central element in the provision of tailored housing services to those who cannot afford to meet their own housing needs. The Council seeks to create sustainable communities and acknowledges that this requires the delivery of quality housing in well managed estates.

This Planning Report has been prepared and compiled by Limerick City & County Councils Design & Delivery Department in consultation with other Design Team members in accordance with the requirements of Circular N7 /2007 '*Revised Arrangements for the Appraisal, Approval and Management of Social Housing Projects*'.

The proposed development will consist of:

(i) Provision of 12 no. residential units consisting of:

- 3 no. 2-bed, 3-person bungalows
- 2 No. 2-bed 4-person 2-storey houses
- 2 No. 2-bed 3-person 2-storey houses
- 5 No. 3-bed 4-person 2-storey houses

(ii) hard landscaping including new: road and traffic calming measures, footpaths, entranceways, boundary treatments, parking, and retaining walls.

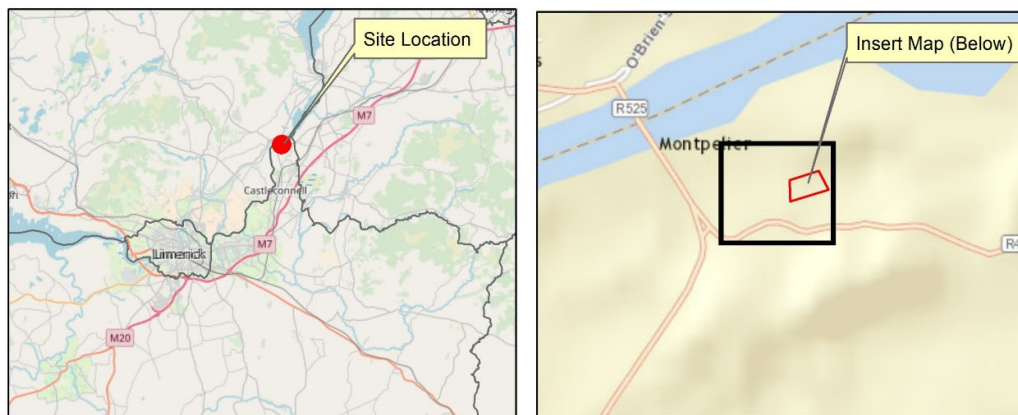
(ii) soft landscaping including new and supplementary hedgerows, and new specimen trees

(iii) new foul sewers and surface water drainage and

(iv) all associated site works.

## 3. Site Context

The subject site measuring 0.78 hectares in area is located within the settlement of Montpelier, 19km north east of Limerick City. Located on the southern banks of the River Shannon on the boundary of County Clare and Limerick, the settlement of Montpelier has developed where the R525 Bridgetown and the R466 Birdhill roads converge.



**Figure 1.0** Site Location Map



**Figure 2.0** Extent of Site Boundaries

The settlement structure for County Limerick which is set out in the County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (CDP) designates Montpelier as a Tier 5 settlement. According to the CDP, Tier 5 settlements generally can be defined as a compact community usually though not exclusively titled a village with a traditional core, which has a number of services and facilities and which function as a service centre for a wider community. The CDP does provide for zoned land in Montpelier and identifies the land for Phase I residential development.

Located on the eastern side of the R513, the site is centrally positioned within the settlement, adjoining the church and community hall. The site slopes steeply to the east and its boundaries are dominated by significant trees and hedgerows. The site is defined by undeveloped zoned lands to the south and north and by agricultural land to the east. To the west is Brookhaven, a residential estate comprising 16 no. semi-detached and terraced units. Access to the site, from the R525 can only be secured through Brookhaven. It is understood that this scheme was developed by a Rural Housing Organisation and later taken in charge by Limerick City & County Council.

The general area is predominantly residential in nature with substantial areas of green space dominating both sides of the R525, before crossing the bridge to Bridgetown. There is a footpath and public lighting connecting the site within the settlement of Montpelier on one side of the public road. However this infrastructure terminates at the bridge and there is no footpath across the bridge linking both settlements.

The subject lands are in the ownership of Limerick City & County Council and therefore can be efficiently utilised to meet some of the demand for social housing arising in the area. Site selection was restricted to consideration of zoned land within the centre of the settlement and close to the defined settlement core. Consideration was also given to that land in the ownership of the City & County Council and which could be adequately serviced and integrated to provide much needed social housing.

As previously detailed in section 2.0 of this report, these sites underwent pre-selection screening internally, with the Physical, Social and Economic pillars, in order to determine their suitability.

Site selection has taken a plan led approach to development having regard to the settlement strategy in the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (CDP) and the location of the site relative to existing services and facilities on land zoned for residential development. Development on the subject land can provide for much needed social housing in the area as well as facilitating population growth within a defined rural settlement in the county, in general accordance with the principles and objectives set out in the CDP.

## **4. Development Plan**

### **Limerick County Development Plan 2019-2016 Adopted November 2010 (including Variations 1-3, 5&6)**

The core strategy of the CDP outlines population targets for County Limerick. Montpelier has been identified as a Tier 5 'zoned settlement' and the CDP envisages that the population in the settlement will grow by 41 no. people up to 2022, with demand for an additional 22 no. housing units. The proposed development of 12 no. units sites comfortably within the envisaged population growth for the settlement., particularly having regard to the modest population growth between 2011 and 2016.

A further policy, contained in the CDP, which seeks to ensure the appropriate and sustainable growth of a settlement, is Objective SS 01 which seeks to ensure that the scale of new housing developments both individually and cumulatively shall be in proportion to the pattern and grain of existing development and to ensure that the expansion of towns and villages shall be in the form of a number of well integrated sites within and around the core area rather than focusing on rapid growth driven by one very large site. In relation to Tier 5 sites, Objective SS 01 specifies that *"generally no one proposal for residential development shall be larger than 10-12 units. A limited increase beyond this may be permitted where demonstrated to be appropriate"*. The proposed development of 12 no. units complies with this objective.

There are adequate policies and objectives in the CDP to support the proposed development.

The subject site is zoned for residential development, where it is an objective to provide for *“new residential development and other services associated with residential development. While housing is the primary use in this zone, recreation, education, crèche/playschool, sheltered housing and small corner shops are also envisaged, subject to the preservation of neighbouring residential amenity”*.

Policy SS P2 of the CDP further supports the residential zoning on the land as it promotes the sustainable development of settlements within tiers 2-6.

Objective SS O2 seeks to promote appropriate design in towns and villages. It states that the design, layout and character of new development shall relate to the local character and heritage of existing towns and villages and shall enhance the existing village character and create or strengthen a sense of identity and distinctiveness of the settlement. This objective is further enhanced by Objective SS O14 which promotes development within tier 5 settlements where the scale of new residential schemes for development are in proportion to the pattern and grain of existing development and are located within or immediately contiguous to the core area.

In terms of on-site provision of wastewater infrastructure, Objective SS O8 adopts a flexible approach to proposals for development in all settlements lacking adequate water and sewerage facilities, where such proposals are consistent with the settlement hierarchy and the obligations of the Council under environmental and water services legislation. As a general rule, priority will be given to the development of lands that can be served by means of gravity sewer as opposed to proposals that rely on pumping. The CDP also states that *“in order to promote sustainable residential development in the defined settlements lacking water services and adequate treatment, the planning authority will adopt a flexible approach to proposals for interim improvements to public water and sewerage infrastructure, consistent with the policies and objectives of the Plan”*. Notwithstanding such policies in the CDP, an application will be made to Irish Water at detailed design stage and it is only then that this issue will be resolved.

## **Compliance with CDP:**

### **Conforming with Standards**

There are a number of quantitative developments which will need to be complied with in advancing the proposed development on site. The quantitative standards are primarily contained in the CDP and these will influence the nature, form and extent of development on the site.

#### *7.2.1 Density & Site Coverage*

Objective SS02 does not promote specific densities for Tier 5 towns but rather promotes development of a scale and nature that facilitates integration of the development into the existing settlement and the surrounding environment. The proposed development is less dense than the adjoining residential development of Brookhaven because the steep topography of the proposed site precludes development. However, the scale and nature of the proposed development of terraced and semi-detached dwellings echoes the scale and nature of the existing.

#### *7.2.2 Car & Bicycle Parking*

Table 10.5 of the CDP requires 1 no. car parking space per 3 bed residential unit plus one visitor space per three units.

The proposed development require 16 no. car parking spaces on site, and 18 are proposed All spaces are contained within the curtilage of each dwelling except unit no's 5&6 where the parking is provided immediately in front of the dwelling.

### *7.2.3 Public Open Space*

The CDP (Table 10.1) requires the provision of 15% public open space in the case of residential development proposals on greenfield sites. The proposed development provides 41% public open space. The apparently high percentage is due to the steep topography of the site. The proposed open space integrates into the area already identified as open space and serving the adjoining residential development where upon entering the proposed site; an avenue of new trees frames the open space towards the existing trees on the western boundary.

### *Private Open Space*

There are no minimum size criteria relating to private open space provision in the CDP. The CDP states that *"in general a minimum back to back distance between dwellings of 22 metres shall apply in order to protect privacy, sunlight and avoid undue overlooking. Reductions will be considered in the case of single storey developments and/or innovative schemes where it can be demonstrated that adequate levels of privacy, natural lighting and sunlight can be achieved"*. The proposed development conforms to these standards and requirements where the back to back distance is over 24m

## **Environmental & Heritage Considerations**

The proposed development site is not located within any Natura 2000 sites (see Figure 6.0) but does lie in proximity to the Lower River Shannon SAC located 0.38km north west of the site. An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening in respect of the proposed development on the site has been carried out by Openfield Ecological Services and they have concluded:

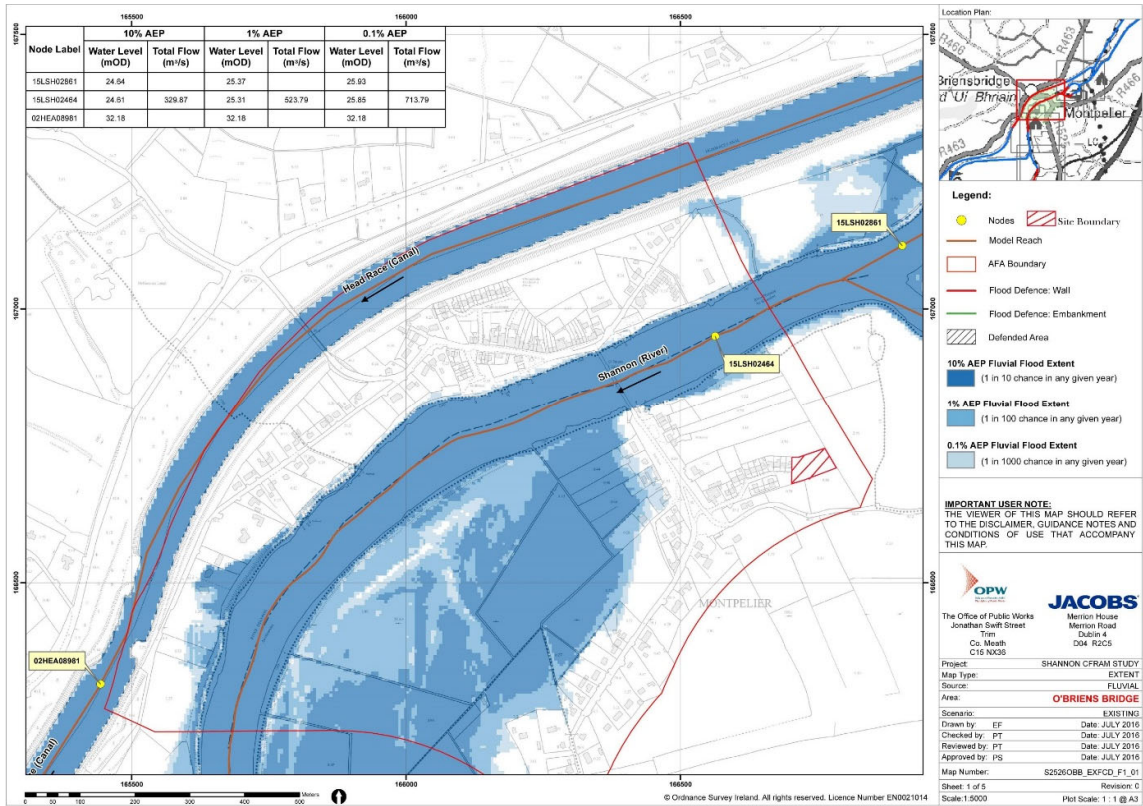
*This study has found that the subject lands are not within or directly adjacent to any Natura 2000 area. While they are in the hydrological catchment of the Shannon Estuary there are no impacts that can be considered significant with regard to the conservation objectives of either the Lower River Shannon SAC or the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA.*

Significant natural hedgerows and trees define the boundaries of the site and although not protected they are of visual and ecological benefit and have be retained in so far as possible. See Tree survey by Arborcare Ltd, and see Ecological impact statement by Openfield ecological services

The site does not appear to be located within an area that is subject to flooding<sup>1</sup>, although it would appear that parts of the settlement are subject to extensive flooding (see Figure 5.0). Whilst the CDP does locate part of the site within Flood Zone A, it should be noted that the Draft CFRAMs provide more up to date flood mapping and confirm the location of the site outside of Flood Zone A.

There are no protected structures on the site and the site is not located in any Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), although part of the settlement is located within an ACA (see Figure 7.0).

The site does not contain any recorded monuments and is not located within a Zone of Archaeological Potential



<sup>1</sup> OPW Draft CFRAM Mapping  
**Figure 5.0** Flood Mapping of Montpelier as per Draft CFRAMS

<sup>1</sup> National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

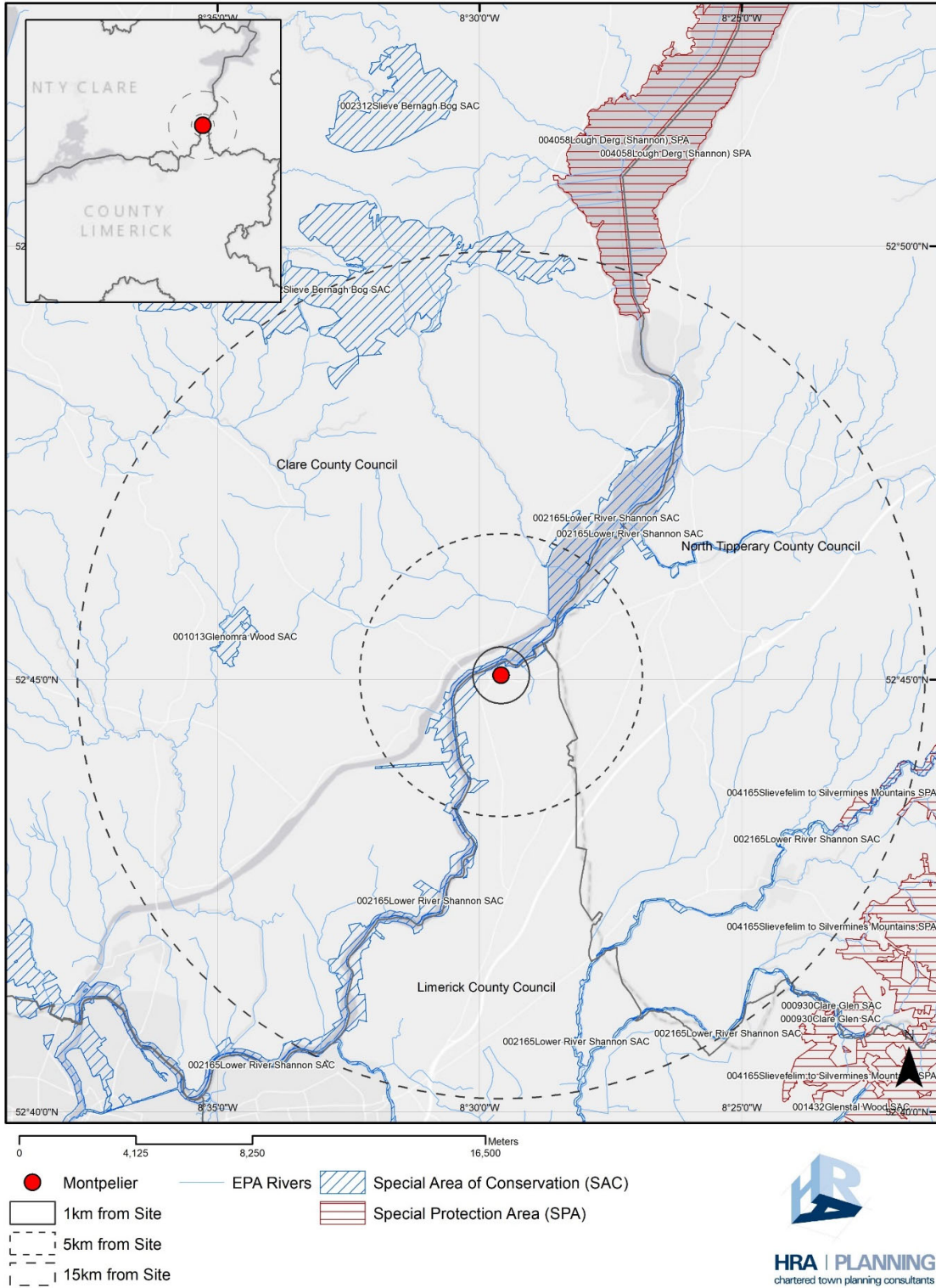
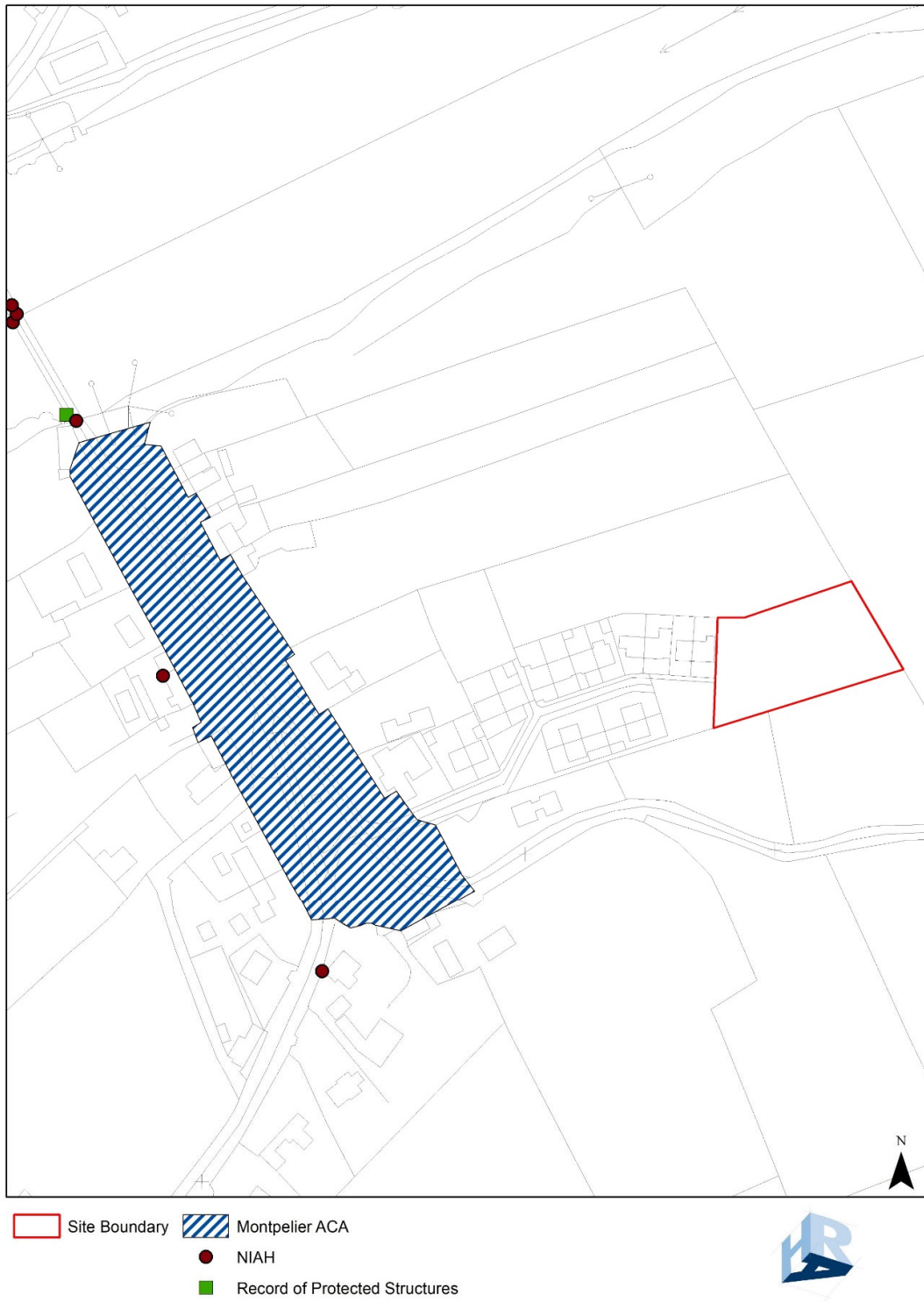


Figure 6.0 Environmental Designations



**Figure 7.0** Environmental Constraints (note flood area is not shown on this map but is identified in Figure 3.0)

## 6. Site Surveys & Investigations

The site and the adjacent road & footpaths of the adjacent Brookhaven estate has been thoroughly surveyed including topographical survey, ground penetrating radar survey, and utilities/services survey, and the proposed scheme has been coordinated with the survey information.

## 7. Brief

The Stage 1 Capital Appraisal outlined the brief as follows:

The proposed development will form a natural extension to Brookhaven. The development of two storey units will have its own distinctive built form and design but will seek to integrate into the existing residential community. The residential amenity of existing residents will be respected with the sensitive positioning and appropriate location of units and public open space on site. This will be particularly important given the elevated nature of levels on the site.

## 8. Design Statement

The design strategy for the site has been formulated in response to the brief, the policy background, the input of Limerick City & County Council co-consultants, and the site context.

### Unit numbers

- 3 no. 2-bed three person single-storey units
- 2 no. 2-bed four person two-storey units
- 2 no. 2-bed three person two storey unit
- 5 no. 3 bed 4 person two storey units

### Existing built and natural context

To the western edge of the subject site is agricultural land and the existing Brookhaven estate

To the north, east and south is agricultural land.

The Brookhaven estate consists of 16 no. semi-detached bungalows, and there is little amenity/open space.

### Proposed Site Layout

With a site that is steeply sloping in parts; the dwellings have been arranged around the flatter parts of the site to provide accessibility in and around the dwellings. The steep areas of the site are within the public open space, and are terraced and landscaped.

The proposed site entrance and road directly follows the existing Brookhaven road in a easterly direction.

The various house types are arranged so that Type 1, the single storey homes, are located on the flattest part of the site and closest to the site entrance, and therefore closest to the amenities. Type 1 house types would be ideally allocated to the frail/elderly. The larger three bed for person units are located at the top end of the site.

The existing building roof line from Brookhaven is maintained in unit no. 1. The bungalow, which echoes the Brookhaven building type, is in a terrace of three units that gently step up the site.

The road continues eastwards into the site and straight ahead is the large open space with the existing mature trees located on the top of the eastern boundary. To assist in the pedestrian accessibility of the site the road cuts through the ground levels and is retained by retaining walls which will be landscaped. The steps here will be shallow so that guard rails will not be required.

As the road changes to a northerly direction, the corner unit no. 4 changes from a single storey to a 2 storey within the same building. The scale and proportion of the 2 storey gable end is designed to reflect the narrow rural gables of the area. The gable detailing also reflects traditional style detailing with simple lines, with no verge boards or soffits.

The building forms are terraced where possible, to support efficient and sustainable aims. But given the horse shoe shape; the form is broken up so that rear access is possible, and gables do not form boundaries which avoids potential for anti-social behaviour.

The units nos 5&6, facing the western boundary, are narrow in depth so that the building line from units and 7 could be maintained; and wide fronted so that adequate private open space could be provided.

To maximise maintain accessibility the proposed road cuts into the landscape again at near the corner unit no. 7, again the ground in this area will be retained by terraces of retaining walls. To add interest and variety it is proposed to plant these terrace with native hedgerow tree planting.

The houses at the top of the site are the larger family units which benefit from less traffic and a large open space.

## **9. Materials**

The building materials have regard to the for nearby buildings with a palette of high quality robust materials including smooth and textured rendered elevations, Aluclad timber windows and composite doors to a selected colour and slated roofs

## **10 Accessibility**

The proposed scheme aims to foster a universal design approach.

All the approaches will be level or gently sloping.

All of the entrances will be fully accessible with level access.